

## **Professional discourse in the medical domain: Advertisements in the web as case studies**

Professional discourse may be defined, here, as any type of semiotic form – spoken, written or visual – used by professionals with special training in order to achieve different transactional and interactional functions. Furthermore, it can be better understood and studied on the basis of communicative behavior to achieve specific disciplinary and professional objectives rather than just on the basis of disciplinary theories (Bhatia 2012). It is through multimodal forms (including verbal language) that professional identity is established. In fact, these multimodal aspects, which are inserted in a professional as well as social practice, must comply with three principles (1) indexicality; (2) reflexivity; (3) performativity – Kong (2014). According to this, this paper aims at specifically discussing the discourse of medical information targeted at adults and produced by the Portuguese Directorate-General of Health (DGS) website to advise people on how to avoid certain health problems. In order to attain this goal, an analysis of professional genres (ten advertisements) in circulation in the DGS website will be carried out. This analysis involves a discussion regarding language strategies, images and audiovisual elements. At the same time, in order to verify the comprehension about the ad, an inquiry involving some adults will be carried out. Our hypothesis is that the tendency to emphasize emotional elements and the lack of rational elements, which are typical in the medical professional discourse, may help persuade people to improve their health behavior.